



News Release

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SBA NAMES CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER 2005 VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

Hartford – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has named **Comm. Linda Spoonster Schwartz**, RN, MSN, DPH, FAAN Major USAF, NC (Ret.) Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs 2005 Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year.

“Veteran advocates are at the top of my priority list,” Charles E. Summers, Jr., the SBA’s New England Regional Administrator. “Commissioner Schwartz provides a matchless service to those who serve our country and I am proud to salute her accomplishments on behalf of all who serve.”

Dr. Schwartz was a member of the United States Air Force (1967-1986) and served both on Active Duty and as a Reservist. She retired in 1986 with the rank of Major after sustaining injuries in an aircraft accident while serving as a USAF Flight Nurse.

She received a Masters in Nursing from Yale School of Nursing and holds a Doctorate in Public Health from the Yale School of Medicine. She has taught and lectured at Mohegan Community College, UCONN, Central Connecticut State University and Yale School of Nursing. She has served as President of the Connecticut Nurses Association and Connecticut Nurses Foundation.

She has been elected to the National Board of Directors of the American Nurses Association, Vietnam Veterans of America and the Vietnam Women’s Memorial. For 12 years, she was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Connecticut Department of Veterans’ Affairs. She was the first woman veteran to receive the prestigious Connecticut Department of Veterans’ Affairs Commendation Medal. She was also the first woman to receive the National Commendation Medal of Vietnam Veterans of America for Justice, Integrity and Meaningful Achievement.

From 1989-1998, she served in several advisory positions to the US Secretary of Veterans Affairs, which included the issues of Readjustment of Combat Veterans, Homeless Veterans, Women Veterans and Seriously Mentally Ill Veterans. She was elected to the American Academy of Nursing in 2001.

She was honored by her home state when she was inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame in 2004. She also received the Legion of Honor Bronze Medallion from the Chapel of the Four Chaplains for her

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services to all people, regardless of race or faith. In 2003 the Governor of Connecticut appointed her Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs. Dr. Schwartz is the first woman and the first nurse in Connecticut's 140-year history of service to veterans to administrate these programs.

As Commissioner, Dr. Schwartz oversees programs serving over 310,000 Connecticut veterans and has actively supported the families of deployed troops. She is a tireless spokesperson for justice for veterans and has received \$46 million in federal and state funding to improve facilities and provide new programs to assist the growing number of veterans. Linda is determined to achieve fair and just treatment for all veterans. Her compassion and insight into the need of soldiers, veterans and their families is evident by her creativity in developing new programs and her efforts to improve existing services for veterans and their families.

Connecticut award recipients will be honored at an awards reception on this Thursday May 19, 2005 at the Belvedere New Haven. If you would like more information on the reception or next year's nominations contact (860) 240-4700 or visit www.sba.gov/ct.

Small businesses have been essential to sustaining our nation's and our state's economic health. Entrepreneurs and advocates play a vital role in the ongoing business development efforts, and their accomplishments are worthy of recognition. The nomination process begins in September of each year and is coordinated by your local SBA office.

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